

Claims 1 and 16 have been amended. No new matter is believed to have been added.

Claims 1-7 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious over the conventional x-ray apparatus arrangement illustrated in Fig. 9 of Applicants' disclosure ("the conventional x-ray apparatus") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,528,043 (Spivey, et al.). Claims 8-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 157 as being obvious over the conventional x-ray apparatus and Spivey, et al., in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,778,044 (Bruijns). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 1 recites, inter alia, a control circuit which stops emission of radiation from a radiation source on the basis of a signal obtained by non-destructively reading an electric signal from an image sensing unit during sensing of an object image by the image sensing unit.

Independent Claim 16 recites, inter alia, stopping emission of radiation from a radiation source on the basis of a signal obtained by non-destructively reading an electric signal from an image sensing unit during sensing of an object image by an image sensing unit.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that neither the conventional x-ray apparatus nor Spivey, et al., either alone or in combination (assuming arguendo that these documents can be combined), teaches or suggests at least the aforementioned features of Claims 1 and 16.

As the aforementioned Office Action notes, the conventional x-ray apparatus does not teach or suggest non-destructive reading. (Office Action, page 3). Nonetheless,

the Office takes the position that Spivey, et al. teaches or suggests this feature, and column 4, lines 3-10 of that patent are cited in support. Applicants respectfully disagree.

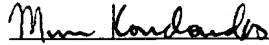
Spivey, et al., at column 3, line 64 - column 4, line 10, teaches that non-destructive reading is performed after a capacitor 24 is charges with a photoelectric conversion charge, to record pixel signals. Thus, Spivey, et al. teaches non-destructively reading out pixel signals after a photoelectric conversion operation (the sensing of an object image) is completed. This differs from the aforementioned features of Claims 1 and 16 which recite non-destructive reading during sensing of an object image.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the independent claims patentably define the present application over the citations of record. Further, the dependent claims should also be allowable for the same reasons as the base claims from which they depend and further due to the additional features that they recite. Separate and individual consideration of each of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that this Amendment After Final Rejection clearly places the subject application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicants believed that the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of the instant Amendment as an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues is requested under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Twice Amended) A radiation image sensing apparatus comprising:
an image sensing unit which senses an object image by converting the object_image on the basis of radiation from a radiation source passing through an object into an electric_signal;
and
a control circuit which stops emission of radiation from the radiation source on the basis of a signal obtained by non-destructively reading the electric signal [converted in] from said image sensing unit [to sense] during sensing of the object image by said image sensing unit.

16. (Twice Amended) An image sensing method for a radiation image sensing apparatus including an image sensing unit which senses an object image by converting the object image on the basis of radiation from a radiation source passing through an object into an electric signal, comprising the step of stopping emission of radiation from the radiation source on the basis of a signal obtained by non-destructively reading the electric signal [converted by] from the image sensing unit [to sense] during sensing of the object image by the image sensing unit.